

San Leandro Computer Club Journal

May 1994

MORAN'S MINUTES

The April general meeting was called to order promptly at 8 PM by President Jim Hood. All Officers were in attendance.

As the first order of business the president reviewed the raffle prizes. The nicest prize was a fresh new XF 551 disk drive still in it's packing box, in addition a \$20 merchandise certificate, a set of remote control joy sticks, the latest internet books and several pieces of software.

Bob Woolley brought the members up to date on the San Jose Computing Store which seems to be slowly fading away.

Several subjects were covered under the usual question and answer period, one of them the apparently rather minor differences in the HP 500 deskjet printer and the HP520, its replacement.

The President in his usual very official manner kindly accepted nominations for the coming years Officers. The nominations were;

President,	Jim Hood Robbie Bridges
Vice President,	Peter Chen Don Safer
Treasurer,	Glenn Fowler Keith Sammons
Secretary,	Jim Moran

More nominations will be taken at the May meeting and the election will be at the June meeting.

Bob Scholar has finally flipped over the edge. He was so excited about

being allowed out at night by himself, when the subject came up about age and marriage and all those good things Bob said he thought he had been married 25 or maybe 30 years. After his wife reads these minutes he will be sore in the rear most section of his anatomy but you can bet he will know how long he has been married.— Oh yes, there is a great floppy this month that is of course fully detailed in the SLCC Journal.

The evenings guest speaker was Michael St. Pierre from MYTEK who demonstrated their new color video overlay called PRISM STUDIO. This is for 8 Bit computers that have a GTIA chip. Not for XE computers. The video overlay allows you to put titles on your home videos in many colors. Prism Studio worked great, every bit as well as the JRI genlock unit for the ST. At \$179 the Prism Studio is a pretty good deal.

This 8 Bit genlock is available from MYTEK only. Their address is P.O. Box 750396 Petaluma, Calif. 94975. There is a demonstration video available from MYTEK if more information is needed.

To complete the evening we had our regular raffle. The big winner was of course Woolley's father. Sure is nice the way Jim and him keep passing the raffle winnings to their relatives. Oh well elections are coming and we might get lucky and get some honest John type Officers.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Jim Moran - Secy.

At the beginning of the game, there are ten hand grenades placed randomly throughout the maze. More grenades will appear randomly throughout the game as the supply is reduced. You can carry a maximum of three grenades at one time. You pick up a grenade by passing through the cell that it is located in. A tone will sound to indicate success. Do NOT press the joystick button to pick up a grenade - you will just waste it by setting it off. You'll find out that you can make turns faster the fewer grenades you are carrying.

Grenades don't last forever; some 35 to 45 seconds after you've picked one up it "decays." You will hear a "deedle" tone on your speaker, and you'll have one less grenade. This means you'll have to avoid sitting around, and actively track down the other players.

To activate a grenade, press your joystick fire button. Three seconds after being activated the grenade will explode (you will hear a "tick-tock" count down the seconds). Any players which are ahead of you (in other words, in your field of view) will lose one life, unless they are able to move out of that hallway before the grenade explodes.

When a grenade is activated, a four-tone alarm will sound on the speaker of any players which are in the explosion zone of the grenade. If your grenade "kills" another player, you will hear the explosion sound in your monitor, and your score will increase. Note that you can only see, and your grenade can only fire, up to eight cells directly ahead. Also note that you are frozen in place while a grenade is counting down, so don't fire one if you need to get out of the way of someone else's grenade. When two of you face off, and both fire a grenade, the one who fired first survives. In the rare event that both of you pushed the trigger at exactly the same time, you both will die.

When you lose a life, you will hear the explosion sound, and the number of lives left will be decremented. The screen will also flash on and off. The first 2 times you die, you are reincarnated in a random position in the maze. You will be spinning around as you come back to life, and nobody can see you while this is happening. This allows you to get some orientation to your new position. When you die the third time, the game is over for you. You will be able to monitor the remaining portion of the game from your screen as a "ghost" that nobody else can see (as long as there are other players left in the game).

While in the overhead view, if you have two or three grenades, you can trade two grenades for a peek at where all the other players are located. Pull your stick back, and press the joystick button. A strange "bleep" sound will occur, and a snapshot of all players' locations will register on your overhead view. You can view this as long as you wish by continuing to pull back on the joystick, but players' locations will not update to show any movement they might have made. The player locations are erased from the overhead view when you let go.

The last player surviving in the maze is the winner. The message "GAME OVER, WINNER:X" will be displayed, flashing on and off, indicating which node has won. To allow for contests, there will be a score displayed on your screen at all times, calculated as:-

- 1) 10 points for every grenade you collect.
- 2) 100 points for each player you kill.

To play another game, have all players press RESET. The Host will return to the title screen (as at the beginning), and the node(s) will see "WAIT FOR MAZE DATABASE". Press START on the Host to begin another game.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON PLAY

Note that new nodes can be added after the end of a game. Press RESET on only the Host (and not any of the other nodes). Plug the new node into the network like the others, and power it up. It should boot up like the others, and will be assigned the next highest node number. If someone mistakenly pressed RESET on a node at the end of a game, and you want to boot up another node, simply pull his serial cable out while the new node boots up.

The speed of updates is six to ten per second;- it's linked to the drawing

speed of the nodes. The one taking the longest to draw the picture determines how fast all of them can move. A minimum update speed is used to avoid wide swings in update rate. You'll also notice that when moving forward, your first step takes longer than all others. This was intentionally programmed in to allow you to "nudge" forward one cell when necessary. Without this feature, even seasoned players found they would consistently overshoot their destination. You'll also find that jamming the stick right or left to make a turn, and moving it directly to the forward position, will enable you to zip around corners (and thereby defeat the "first step" delay).

SHAREWARE REGISTRATION

This version is the first fully operational shareware release. Shareware allows you to use the product before you purchase it. If you decide you do not like it, please pass it on to another Atari 8-bit user. If you use and enjoy this product, please mail in the requested registration fee. By doing so, you will be telling the authors you respect their programming time and efforts, and encourage them to continue supporting this platform.

We are sure you have noticed the lack of new software for the Atari 8-bit computer. Shareware is the most effective method by which a small group of programmers such as ourselves can most efficiently distribute a work like this. But we rely heavily on the honesty of the user community out there.

The version of the game you have is a full, working program, with no crippling features and no usage limits. We intend to enhance the game in the near future and only offer the enhanced version to registered users.

To register, please send \$5 and a letter to The AGDA Group
Post Office Box 134 - Ontario, OH 44862, USA

In your letter, please provide us feedback on what you like and dislike, and new features you would like to see included. You will receive the following:

- A personalized autographed copy of the most recent "MAZE OF AGDAGON".
- A hardcopy of all documentation, including advanced documentation with strategy tips and technical information on the GameLink-II protocol.
- Advance e-mail (on GEnie, CompuServe, or Internet) notice of availability of the next version of "MAZE OF AGDAGON".

In addition, technical support for registered users will be given priority over that of non-registered users. The Agda Group will maintain a presence on the GEnie online service, and can be reached via e-mail to:

Chuck Steinman Jeff Potter

GEnie: DATAQUE.1 JDPOTTER

CompuServe: 71777,3223 74030,2020

Internet: potter@sunny.dab.ge.com

Credits

Program Coordinators: Chuck Steinman

Documentation and Serial I/O Routines: Chuck Steinman and Jeff Potter

Graphics Routines: Jeff Potter.

Sound Routines: Jeff Casbeer

Beta Testing: J. Sliker, J. Williams, R. Detlefsen; MFACC and JACE members.

AGDADEMO

There is a 'limited version' DEMO and \$.DOC which only allows you to see a one-player game (leaving the multi-player feature to your imagination).

You can restart the demo at any time by pressing RESET, and then START. Each time you play, the maze is regenerated - so don't bother memorizing it.

This demo will let you get accustomed to the player movement. You'll probably figure out real quick that the four randomly-positioned players never move, and never die when you shoot them (although you'll get the 100 points for killing them). But when you play this interactively with other Agdagon players, \$they\$ will look like those red ellipses (and will move around), and you will look like that to them.

OUR LATEST 8-BIT D.O.M.

by Bob Scholar SLCC 8-bit Software Chairman

SLCC1205.DOC
MAY 1994

GENERAL COMMENTS

It's official now:- AC Magazine (ATARI CLASSICS) will be going out of business! - More on this later!!

D.O.M. SUMMARY

This disk has 6 featured programs (two with multiple files) + 4 others; for a total of 16 files. There are 5 Games (of various types); and a Print Shop (file indexer) UTILITY.

CONTENTS- DISK #1205:-

Front:-

*SLCC1205.DOC	029	TITLE	010
AUTORUN .SYS	002	MENU	034
DOS .SYS	039	AGDARULE.DOC	141
GMLINKII.DOC	120	AGDAGON .OBJ	099
AGDADEMO.OBJ	090	AGDADEMO.DOC	057
(last 5 files, above, make up the Game 'MAZE OF AGDAGON')			
POKRSOL .BAS	084		

002 FREE SECTORS

Back:-

*BGM .COM	216	BGM .DOC	031
PSINDEXER.BAS	057	PSINDEXER.DOC	050
*AUTORUN .SYS	045	GDAT .1	154
GDAT .2	031	SPYHOTEL.EXE	092
SCORES	001	BOXIN .BAS	030

000 FREE SECTORS

PROGRAM DETAILS

AGDAGON.OBJ is the 'main' file of five on this disk. Together they make up the "Maze Of Agdagon" which is the first multi-player (up to eight), and multi-computer, interactive game for Atari 8-bits. The others are a DEMO (for one player) and three DOCs;- one for the Rules; one for the DEMO, and one which shows how to make (or get) a special cable (GaMeLiNK) to connect the players. All the DOCs are in 80 column format, for easy printout. It was Democed at the Jan. meeting by Bob Woolley & Don Safer. It's Shareware, so be sure to read the DOC file about registration, etc.

BGM.COM. (Backgammon) by Mark K. Vallevand;- is a conversion, to 8-bit Atari, of a program originally in "C" for Unix. It is Keyboard driven, not joystick! It seems to play a decent game! It will not run if BASIC is in the computer. Load it from DOS "L",- not from the menu on the disk's back! Instructions are in the Game. It also has a separate DOC, mostly devoted to telling how the Game was written.

BOXIN.BAS;- for 1 player & J/S- an arcade Game by J.D.Caston (ANTIC Dec. '85). He was in high school in Eugene when he wrote it in 1983;- Harold is in a room with a monster (Gruck), and 100 green, Harold-eating, but monster repellent boxes. He has to trap Gruck with the boxes, before Gruck can turn him into monster mulch. He does this by pushing boxes around Gruck so that he cannot move- including diagonally. [SELECT] sets the difficulty level.

POKRSOL.BAS by Jerry White (from ANTIC 3/84); may be familiar to many SLCC members. For 1 to 4 players; it is one of the best solitaire games I know of. I was very surprised to find that it was not in our library. This version was on a DACE disk. There are good instructions in the program.

PSINDEXER.BAS (& .DOC)- creates a file of icon names of Printshop disks which can then be printed, searched sorted, etc. There are many programs to make hardcopies of icons on Print-Shop disks. This one can give you a sorted list of names. It has a DOC. By Steve A. Walker- it's Shareware.

SPYHOTEL is an action Game with 5 files. Remove BASIC and load the file AUTORUN.SYS from DOS! Use a Joystick. Stand in front of the elevators; wait for the spies to come out; then blast them when they do! The bad guys have guns & bombs. Don't shoot good guys! Shareware by Dennis Zander- 1986. It has instructions in the program.

GAME REVIEW

by Steve Goldstein

TOWERS

Published By JV Enterprises

I first read about TOWERS in the March issue of ST Informer. That review described the game as being like Dungeon Master which is one of my all time favorite games (even though I can't seem to get by the worms on level 3). Well, I had to see for myself so I downloaded the files from GENIE. After un-arc'ing the files to two double sided floppy disks (even the arced files are quite large so my almost full 20 Meg hard drive couldn't hold them) I printed the README file which contains registration instructions and a mini users manual.

Towers is being marketed as TRY-WARE which means that the full game is supplied in the downloaded files with all of the features. Several levels can be played (I believe the limit is four but I haven't reached that level yet) before the game asks for an input from the manual. I will tell you how to get the manual at the end of this review.

Towers can be run in a one player mode which requires 862340 bytes of FREE memory or a 2 player mode using Null-Modem or Midi cables. The two player mode requires 928360 bytes free. I have not played the two player game but the ST Informer review reports that you can fight against the second players character. Towers can be installed on a hard drive or, if you are using floppies, you can use a second disk drive. The game can be run on the ST/STE/TT/Mega and Falcon systems.

To load the program run TOWERS.PR.G. Once the program is up and running there are four options to choose from. You can select one of them or press ESC to exit. The four options are as follows:

1) INTRODUCTION - as you might expect, this gives an introduction to the game by describing what brought you to this point in the story.

2) INCARNATION - This is the option which begins a new game by allowing you to pick the character you will assume during the adventure.

3) CONTINUATION - This allows you to restore a saved game by presenting a file selection menu from which you can select the game to restore.

4) CONNECTION - This option allows you to connect to a game in

progress on another computer. Be sure the computers are connected by Midi cables or a Null-Modem cable before selecting this option.

Once the game is started, control is by the mouse and the left mouse button. Movement may also be controlled by the cursor keys as follows:

Insert - turn left.

Up Arrow - move forward.

Clr/Home - turn right.

Left Arrow - move left.

Down Arrow - move back.

Right Arrow - move right.

Objects may be picked up by placing the cursor arrow over the object and clicking the left mouse button. Other controls are similar to Dungeon Master. Spells are cast by clicking on the spell window and then clicking on each of the words in the spell. The spell is launched by clicking on the completed spell. Spells may or may not work depending on the situation and the experience of the spell caster.

The player's view is that of the adventurer looking at the world around him. My one major complaint is that the colors are very drab and some objects, namely keys, tend to blend in with the background making them somewhat difficult to spot.

I have managed to get through two levels of the game and am trying the third. My overall impressions of the game are very good. It plays easily and the obstacles in the first couple of levels are not so difficult be frustrating.

The cost to register and get the full manual is \$15.00. The documentation is offering a bonus to all registered participants. If you find and decode an Easter Egg in the game and send the information to JV Enterprises before May 31, 1994, you will be eligible to win a Jaguar Game System.

I will try to get a copy to Glenn Fowler so that it can be available as disks of the month. If you can't wait and have access to GENIE search the ST library for TOWERS and download the two program files and the patch file (this fixes some bugs from earlier versions). There are other files in the ATARI ST library which are maps and hints.

I will also try to demo the game at the May general meeting.

For more information or to register the address is:

JV Enterprises
P.O. Box 97455
Las Vegas, NV 89193

Rise and Fall of Atari Oz

Now that the dust has settled and most of the involved parties departed from the scene, it is time to set the record straight on what Atari's "downsizing" of their Australian operation really means.

Atari US looked closely at the state of it's overseas, solely owned, subsidiaries and took radical steps to cut numbers and reduce product lines. This was done to reduce operating costs which have spiralled in the computer manufacturing industry over the last few years. The accountants would say that operating costs must be below 20% and nearer to 10% for long term survival and Atari, whose corporate excesses were legendary in the video game days, may have needed the cuts.

In the short term, it was just saving bucks towards the \$500 million US deal with IBM and to pay for a decent advertising campaign on the Jaguar. On a purely sales versus numbers basis, Australian staff levels were clearly higher than those for Atari Germany, who had only 9 Staff(!), and after all the old stock was cleared out, the job was done. It did not matter that the Atari name in Australia was suffering from years of being tagged as a "games machine" company and as a joke in computer circles whereas in Germany, Atari is regarded much higher than the PC crowd because of Atari's superior engineering and more cost effective software.

A lot of the behind the scenes effort by Atari's Australian staff was aimed at restoring confidence in Atari and was clearly succeeding if advance orders for the Falcon were anything to go by with orders far exceeding availability.. In US business circles, it is advantageous to write off short term losses against long term profits and re-start later on, in effect avoiding tax burdens. This is of course no help to the people involved but the powers

that be at Atari had seen that the job had been done and that Atari Australia had turned the corner and were threatening to make a profit, thus upsetting the applecart. In staggering fashion, defeat was wrested from the jaws of victory and Atari Australia was doomed to return to obscurity, mourned only by those who knew how good their hardware really was.

The managing director responsible for the threatening turnaround into profitability for Australia was Tony Sierra and he had recruited some top people in the local industry before being canned.

John Cooper, is ex-Amstrad and was responsible for much of their success over the last few years. Anyone who could sell such a large number of their truly woeful PC boxes must be good! His job as Business Manager at Atari was to manage the day to day running and watch the pennies whilst rebuilding he operation. He is now in the hot seat and is trying to run an operation with no Lynxes, no ST's, no Falcons and nothing to sell!

In charge of product development was Brian Rennie - a very shrewd buyer for Tandy who also knew how to sell Tandy's equally weird PC boxes with their proprietary architecture. Brian's job at Atari was to keep up the pressure on overseas developers and ensure that upon release, the Falcon would have some top software to go with it. He succeeded with 4TFX and had lined up far more with Calligrapher and DA's Vector to follow but corporate actions prevented such radical ideas as Atari supporting a new machine with software.

A more familiar face was Filomena Tamburro, who had handled Amstrad's accounts with their big retailers like Brashes and knew the retail industry very well. She also had the



courage to front MACE and try to set the record straight with what Atari had planned - a very brave move considering the past record of poor support for user groups from Atari Australia. Her efforts were also in vain though she did manage to recruit new Atari dealers in every state and restore a lot of the lost confidence in Atari at dealer level. Another victim of corporate downsizing.

Towards the end, Tony Sierra had proposed a buyout of Atari Australia with distribution to revert to a private company, much like the previous importers such as Mobiltronics, Futuretronics etc. but with much greater backing provided by, it is said, a very able Sir Peter amongst others. The sell off would have been just one among many with Amstrad finally doing the same thing and closing it's direct Australian distribution altogether. It doesn't really make much sense for the manufacturer to handle direct distribution in such a small market as Australia and a local company has much more insight into the needs of the market. It also has to do well and make sales to stay afloat and, dare it be said, make a profit. It cannot fall back on revenue from video games to stay afloat.

Needless to say, negotiations broke down at the last minute with the arrival of a representative expected to sign over the company turning into "send in the receivers" and "look for another job, you've lost this one". With that, Tony Sierra departed, hopefully to more greener pastures. Followed by Brian Rennie and Filomena Tamburro soon followed. The only survivors of note are John Cooper and Bob Lane, who is now the longest surviving at Atari Australia. The dealer's first contact at Atari, Naz Hartley, saw the writing on the wall after months of job insecurity and bailed out before the US heavies stepped in. Good move as it turns out.

Can John Cooper pick up the pieces and rebuild Atari Oz again if Atari US follow their game plan of gearing up for the release of the Jaguar downunder in July? And how does all this affect the loyal Atari user in Australia? In answer to the possibility of a phoenix-like

recovery of Atari here, their chances are next to zero. Though the major games machine retailers like Brashes, K-Mart etc. have been largely kept in the dark, it must be sinking in by now that without Lynxes to sell and that no Falcons were readily available for the Christmas rush, things are not okay in Sydney. It is doubtful that retailers who have been burned by all this will take on Atari products again unless there is major advertising of Jaguar on all media and very good margins to be made.

The games market though is totally driven by what is in fashion and that is largely determined by who spends the most on TV advertising. Perhaps Atari can compete but only if

they outlay big bucks. Brand loyalty is far less with the games machine fans and Atari may convert

enough to make it viable. Expect to pay \$600 for the Jaguar though.

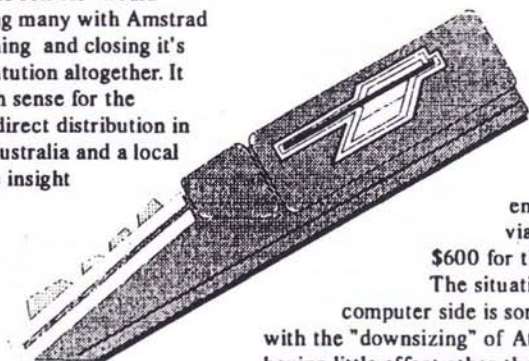
The situation on the

computer side is somewhat different

with the "downsizing" of Atari Australia having little effect other than making Falcon's even harder to get but demand has not exactly exceeded supply with too many buyers hanging off, waiting for the semi-mythical 040 wonder machine. Don't hold your breath, says Bob Brodie.

The Atari market in Australia is totally consumer driven with no advertising by Atari to attract any new users. As long as existing users support local dealers, they will in turn carry Atari hardware and software but only if it sells. If it doesn't, then the money invested in Atari stock will be diverted to the booming PC market. Perhaps Atari users follow the "power without price" idea too closely.

On the PC platform, word processors such as Microsoft Word and Word Perfect sell quite happily at in excess of \$600 whereas very few Atari users ever consider such outlays on software, preferring to wait for cover disks versions. Programs such as Redacteur and Calligrapher Gold are easily the equal of anything on the PC platform but sales of serious software at realistic prices are very



low. Calamus S/L is light years beyond anything on any other platform but does it sell well in Australia? No! Pirate copies outnumber legitimate versions about 10 to one. Cubase and Notator could easily top 200 to 1 for pirate versus legal copies. Hapiracy killed the ST here and abroad? Not quite yet but it has certainly forced a great number of developers into the PC arena where even though piracy far outstrips that on Atari, the greater number of legitimate users can offset the losses. Piracy has in fact caused the dominance of the PC as everyone who has bought a PC has usually done so because "so and so has so much software and can lend me some". This has made good money for the hardware manufacturers but not so good for developers. The PC market is no more honest than the ST market but it is much bigger and can survive casual piracy.

Atari Australia can be blamed for not marketing the machine into "niche markets" such as DTP where it could have become a standard like McIntosh with suitable development but games were always seen as the important thing - volume before longevity. Development of newer, faster, machines also lagged behind but the TT could easily have competed in the DTP field had Atari been serious - perhaps offering a graphics card/Calamus bundle to secure market share.

As to the future, if you, the user support your local dealer, then Atari has a future but it does get hard to justify big outlays for such a small, if dedicated, market. Regardless of what Atari Australia do or what happens to them - perhaps the German buyout of their computer interests will happen, there will always be a supplier if there is a demand. It is up to the user to ensure this.

If an independant distributor takes over the importing of Atari, things will return to much the same situation as with Futuretronic et al but big dollars will be needed to recover market share unless this burden again falls on the dealers. Dealers have a hard enough time staying afloat without having to foot the bill for advertising. If an existing dealer is appointed, then the situation will get even more lopsided because it is not a good thing for a wholesaler to wear two hats - the temptation is always there to sell at a retail price that no other dealer, buying from the

wholesale arm, can match. Perhaps appointing a dealer to each state may solve the problem but it will take a lot of work to restore user confidence and entice new buyers to the platform.

In the short term, it is up to the dealers still interested in Atari to survive until some new direction appears in the Atari market, other than downhill, and for user groups to continue to promote Atari. Don't stick your head in the sand and keep to the ST because when you finally pop your head out of the sand when the ST dies, all you will see is a desert of PC clone boxes! The Falcon will have died from a lack of sales long before so don't leave it up to someone ELSE to keep it afloat. If it sells, it will continue in production but if everybody waits for the guy next door to buy one first, then Atari will just walk away from it and make money out of the games machines. It is up to you.

by Random Bits - Still hopefully Atari!

From Feb/Mar 1994 *Feedback*
the newsletter of the
Adelaide Atari Computer Club

Open House at the
U.S. Geological Survey
Sat. & Sun., May 21 & 22, 1994

USGS Western Regional Center
345 Middlefield Rd.
(between Ravenswood Rd. & Willow Rd.)
Menlo Park, CA

- See exhibits & displays of USGS research.
- Talk with scientists about their work.
- Learn fascinating facts about our earth.
- Tour USGS laboratories.
- Bring your favorite rock, fossil or mineral for identification.
- Learn how maps are made.
- See how computers assist in USGS research.
- Enjoy educational videos.
- Investigate new career opportunities.

From 101 take Willow Rd exit west to Menlo Park. Drive 1 mile to Middlefield Rd, turn right (north). USGS main entrance is about 2 blocks on the left (west) side of the street. Enter by main driveway.

MAZE OF AGDAGON

Copyright (c)1990,1991,1992,1993 - The AGDA Group
Version 1.0 12/27/93

This program is SHAREWARE. See "SHAREWARE REGISTRATION".

"MAZE OF AGDAGON", is the first multi-player multi-computer game developed for the 8-bit Atari Computer. With this game, and the GameLink-II connection (described elsewhere), you and up to 7 other Atari 8-bit gamers can engage in mortal combat in a 1st person 3-D viewable maze.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

1 to 8 Atari 8-bit computers (48k), and JoySticks; but only 1 disk drive.

The GameLink-II device(s). Depending on which one you build/buy, you may also require a serial bus cable per player. (See GameLink-II documentation.)

GAME STARTUP

One Atari 8-bit computer must serve as the "Host", and will be the one that initially loads the game software. This one should have only one disk drive connected to its serial bus. Boot up the Host with your favorite DOS, then load the AGDAGON.COM file. After you can see the title screen, connect the Host to the GameLink-II serial bus (you should disconnect it from the disk drive at this time). Connect another Atari 8-bit computer (powered off, with no other serial peripherals connected, with monitor turned on) to the GameLink-II device. Turn it on, and it should "boot up" directly, using the Host as if it were the disk drive. You will notice the sound is different. The usual "beep-beep-beep" of the disk drive loading is replaced by one constant, long "beeeeeep". If the "node" has booted properly, it will display a screen that says "Press START only after all nodes load." If the node doesn't boot the first time, be patient. The boot code will retry several times. If you wish to boot up other computers at this time, plug them into GameLink-II and boot them up as you did the first node. When all are ready, press START on all the nodes (but not the Host), which should then switch to the game screen and say "WAIT FOR MAZE DATABASE". Then press START on the Host to send the random maze and start the game.

Before you press START on the Host, the highlighted numbers at the bottom of the screen should indicate which nodes are active. If the highlighted numbers don't match what you've got set up, you can toggle individual numbers by pressing the appropriate keys (on the Host keyboard). This tells the program which nodes are active, so if you declare some active which are not active, it will waste time trying to poll the inactive nodes. The Host can also declare nodes inactive during game play by holding down START and pressing the appropriate number keys. You could use this to zap players who have decided to quit before the end. Don't forget to re-enable their node numbers at the beginning of the next game, however.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

A maze of 15 x 15 cells is the playfield. You see a first-person perspective view of the maze from your current position and direction of travel. The walls are opaque, and a color scheme is used that helps you orient yourself as to your current direction (east-facing walls are a light orange in color, west-facing walls are dark). You are able to see other players and grenades that are in your path. The grenades are white ellipses, and the other players are larger red ellipses with eyes and a crooked smile. You are able to move forward, or turn left or right by pressing the joystick forward, left, or right.

Your view will change to indicate your new position. Turns are shown with hardware scrolling, helping you follow the changing direction.

You can select an overhead view by pulling back on the joystick. You will hear a "ding" sound. The overhead view indicates your current position, and any opponents in your view. Also, any cells which you have traveled are in green, to allow you to keep track of where you have been. Cells that have been in your field of view are in black, to help tell you what paths remain to be explored.

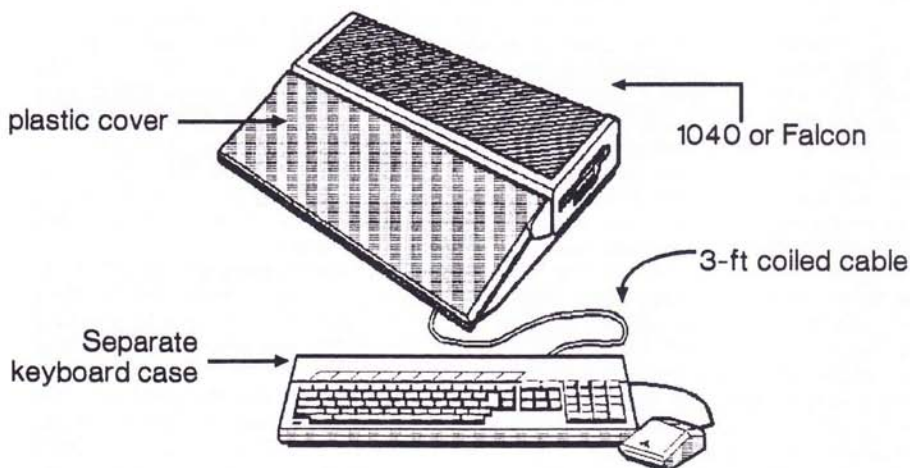
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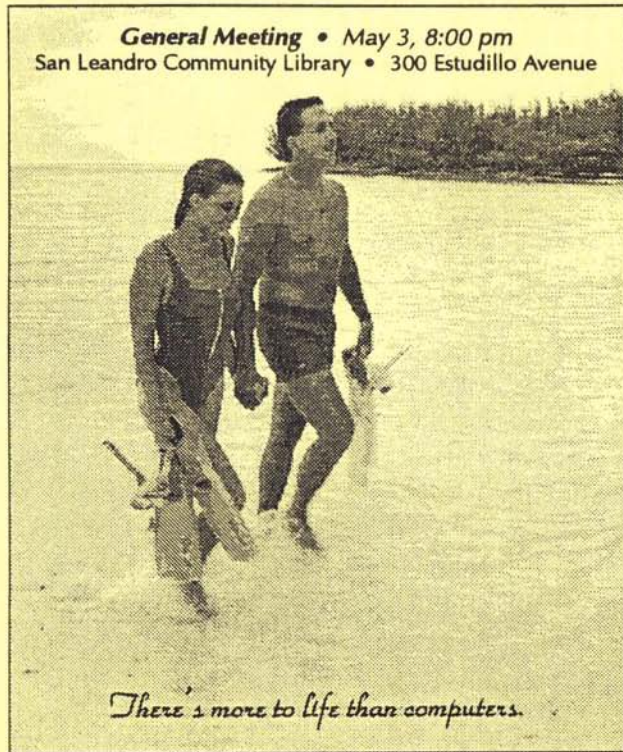
May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	Main Meeting 8:00 PM	4	5	6	7
8	ST SIG Meeting 8:00 PM	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	Pc SIG Meeting 8:00 PM	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Journal Deadline 12:00 PM	30	31				

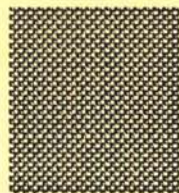
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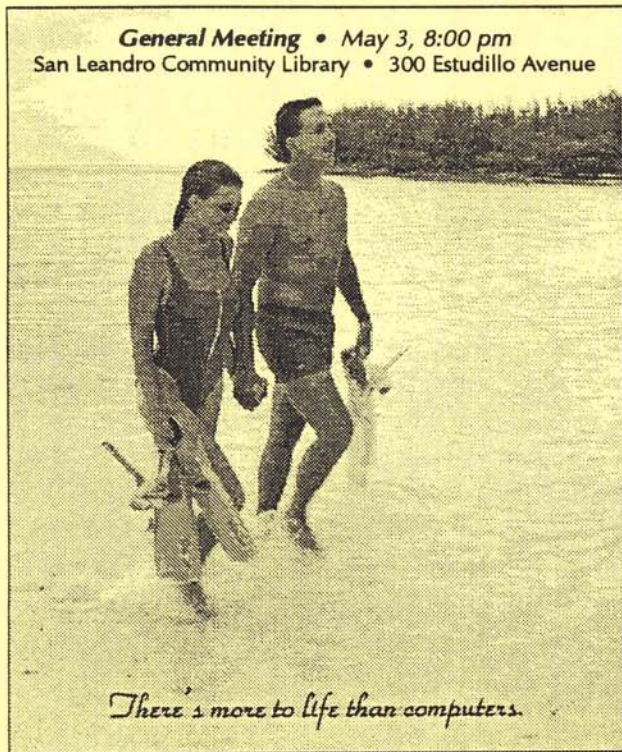


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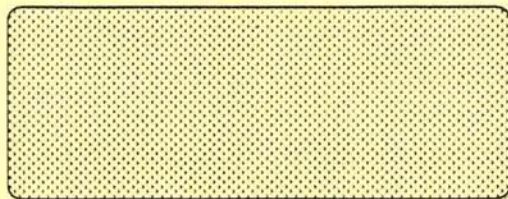
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